REMARKS / DISCUSSION OF ISSUES

Claims 34 to 53 are pending in the application; claims 1-33 are canceled.

To facilitate prosecution of this case, the following remarks are provided with respect to the previously cited art of Echerer (USP 5,740,267), Fenster (USP 5,454,371), Stockham (USP 6,081,267), and Buxton (USP USP 5,798,752).

The previously cited prior art fails to teach a defined set of sequential graphic modes.

Background of the Application

In conventional graphic systems, the user selects each mode, generally in whatever order the user chooses. When a user wants to measure a line, the user performs an action that specifically indicates the user's desire to enter a line-measuring mode (e.g., the user selects a line-measuring mode in a menu of options in the GUI). If the user subsequently wants to measure an area, the user performs a different action that indicates the user's desire to exit the line-measuring mode and enter the area measuring mode. These two modes are not predefined to occur in sequential order. The user may at one time measure areas, then lengths, then angles, while at some other time measure lengths, then areas, then angles. Because modes can be entered at will by the user in any order, the user must provide some indication of which mode is to be entered next.

By predefining a sequential order of graphic modes, the user's choice is limited to entering the next predefined mode (or terminating the process). Accordingly, the user need not, and can not, indicate which graphics mode is to be entered next.

Although the user's options are substantially limited to either next-mode or termination, the user's operation of the system is simplified, and the need to display options to the user is eliminated.

In the medical imaging environment, the users are not generally skilled graphic system operators, and the number and type of graphic tasks that these users are expected to perform are minimal. The applicant has recognized that because the tasks are limited in scope, sets of predefined graphics modes can be defined and executed sequentially without limiting the user's ability to perform these limited graphic tasks. This forced sequential entry into each defined mode also minimizes the potential for error on the part of the un-skilled user, particularly if the sequence is logically arranged and the user's entry to the next mode is simple and consistent.

The preceding paragraphs have been presented to the Examiner as background to facilitate the Examiner's understanding of the application. The preceding paragraphs should not be construed as limiting the claims in any way. For example, the described benefits are not limiting to the claims, but simply examples to enhance the Examiner's understanding of the application.

In view of the foregoing, the applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner allow all the pending claims, and find the application to be in condition for allowance. If any points remain in issue that may best be resolved through a personal or telephonic interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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